

repairs to the house. It was expected that they should visit the school, but actual supervision was almost unknown. Teachers of several years incumbency declare that before the past year, no school officer was ever seen within their doors, during the hours of study and recitation.

Little care was taken to secure the services of fit and competent men, and the selection was too often decided by personal favor, or, what is worse, by partizan partiality. Yet there were many good teachers. Recently, one of the abuses of the old system, the multiplication of the kinds of school books, had been measureably corrected by the adoption by the County Commissioners, at the suggestion of some of our most enlightened teachers, of a series of books which should be used in all the schools. The evil had become so great that scarcely any two schools used the same Text-Books, and often in the same school, classes could not be formed on account of this diversity. I found in one school four Spellers, six Readers (or thirteen, if each one of a series should be counted,) six Arithmetics, (or eight, counting all of a series,) four Grammars, four Algebras, and three Philosophies. The cost of these books to the County (for the County supplied books free of charge,) was enormous. There was no school apparatus, with the exception, in a few of the houses, of black-boards, of the use of which the teachers seemed to be unconscious, and in fewer still, of outline maps, which were unintelligible to the gentlemen in charge. And yet, with all these drawbacks—want of care in the selection of teachers, entire absence of supervision, multiplication of books, want of school apparatus, and loss of interest on the part of the people—the schools were doing good, educating in the rudiments of learning, a large number of children; and what is not to be disregarded in our estimate of them, preparing the public mind for the introduction of that salutary reform projected in our "*Uniform system of Free Public Schools.*"

II. "By what funds supported, and what degree of efficiency the schools attained."

The latter clause of your query I have answered as fully as needful, above. It remains only for me to reply to the former. Our schools were supported by the share of the State Free School Fund, which falls to the county annually, and by a levy made by the County Commissioners to supply the deficiency. There was an additional levy to pay for books and stationery which were furnished to the children free of charge, and for fuel, but no other incidental expenses were defrayed from the common fund. The expenses of building and repairing school houses were borne by the District requiring such houses, and the repairs to them, and the necessary funds were raised by a tax upon the assessable